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ABSTRACT

The introductory speech communication course can benefit from the use of simulation exercises. In one exercise, students negotiate on behalf of the imaginary governments of Franistan and Germania. Participants are furnished with statistical data and informed that the two countries are mutually dependent, that they share a border, and that the city of Midly straddles the border. The problem to be negotiated is that only the Germanian side of the city has hospitals, so Franistanian mothers must obtain Germanian passports to bear children there. The newborn children are treated as Germanian citizens, and must obtain Germanian passports to return home. Franistan objects to this practice, while Germania claims that the fees generated help support the Germanian welfare system. Members of the class are divided between the two groups and are provided with lists of characteristics of both countries' citizens. The goal is to solve the conflict by arriving at a written treaty through negotiation. Often, the exercise produces a weak treaty, but other solutions may arise. Through the exercise, students typically gain an increased understanding of decision-making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution. And they usually enjoy the exercise. (SG)

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UTILIZING GERMANIA-FRANISTAN AS AN EXERCISE IN NEGOTIATED DECISION-MAKING FOR THE INTRODUCTORY SPEECH COMMUNICATION COURSE

by

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Germania-Franistan is a simulation which can be used in the basic course to increase student understanding of conflict, conflict resolution, decision-making and problem solving. In addition to these benefits, this activity provides a stimulating and enjoyable communication experience and helps students develop group skills. This simulation is representative of the "guns or butter" dilemma common to many political science and economic simulations.

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UTILIZING GERMANIA-FRANISTAN AS AN EXERCISE IN NEGOTIATED DECISION-MAKING FOR THE INTRODUCTORY SPEECH-COMMUNICATION COURSE

The Germania-Franistan simulation may be used as a one-day (one class period) exercise or as the central portion of a more-involved week-long exercise. In most courses, one day is the desirable length. This activity typically is offered late in the course, although it could be used anytime. The primary purpose in offering this activity is to increase student understanding of conflict, conflict resolution, decision-making and problem-solving. In addition, it provides a stimulating and enjoyable communication experience and helps students develop group skills.

This simulation is representative of the "guns or butter" dilemma common to many political science and economics simulations. One country, Germania, is highly-industrialized,, high in consumer consumption, high in population; the average standard of living is better than in middle class America. The other country, Franistan, is rich in raw materials (mining and agricultural), with modest consumer consumption, and high in population. The average standard of living is below the poverty level for the United States.

The two countries share a common border, and have been mutually dependent upon each other for centuries. While both countries engage in commerce with other nations, most of

their imports come from each other; to vary this arrangement would be economically prohibitive. The two countries share a city, Midly; there are two large modern hospitals, both located on the Germanian side of the border in Midly. There are no hospitals in the entire country of Franistan.

When used as a brief one class-session activity, the problem is described briefly, perhaps with a simple map drawn on the chalk board. The essential elements for the students to know are that Franistan is significantly larger than Germania, that Midly is located on both sides of the international border, and that the only two hospitals in either country are located in Midly--on the Germanian side.

It is best if three rooms are available for this exercise, or two rooms and an area where other classes will not be disturbed. In limited physical environments, this might become a joint activity shared with another class. If this option is selected, usually it is best to combine the classes rather than place one class "against the other." Each teacher should spend some time with each "country" during the exercise.

If a second room is not available, members of the two countries may go to opposite corners of the classroom and confer, with negotiators going to a third corner of the classroom. Or the exercise may be conducted outside, or in a larger area such as a gymnasium or auditorium. Under the most limiting conditions, it will work in a classroom--

provided students do not become too aggressive in attempting to discover what the other country is discussing.

The scenario or situation is that the two hospitals in the city of Midly are located in the city's Germanian section. Women from Franistan who wish to have their children born in one of these hospitals must secure a passport and visa from Germania to enter the country. When the children are born, although their parents are Franistanians, they are considered to be Germanians and are required to obtain a Germanian passport to return home. Franistan wants Germania to drop the requirement of the passports and visas and to recognize that these children are Franistanians. Franistan feels that this is reasonable because the mother and child return to Franistan soon after the child's birth. Germania does not want to change the law because the revenue from passports and visas helps support their welfare system. Germania hopes that this will decrease the heavy demand on the hospitals by Franistanians; Franistanians, however, realize that childbirth in a hospital setting greatly decreases child and mother mortality rates.

The question for students to resolve is how can the conflict of interests between these two nations be resolved? Although these countries have been mutually interdependent for centuries, now they are very displeased with each other. Germanians claim the "user fees" are necessary to support Germania's welfare system, and the increased demand upon

service occupations necessitated by the large numbers of Franistanians who are flocking to Germania's hospitals. Franistan insists these charges are unfair, and economically punitive to the average Franistanian.

The procedure to be followed is for the instructor to divide the class into two countries--Germania and Franistan. Germanians are sent to one room (or corner or area), Franistanians to another. A third location is set aside as the negotiation area (room). The objective of the activity is to place a written treaty, ratified by both countries, in the instructor's hands at the end of the class period. The instructor is a neutral observer and an information source if factual details need clarification for the students. Each country may select one, two or three negotiators.

Negotiators indicate that they are ready to negotiate with the other country by going to the negotiation area. Every member of a country may talk with any other member of that country. Negotiators may not talk with non-negotiators from the other country. Negotiators are responsible for delivering information and presenting issues to negotiators of the other country. The decision-making power exercised by negotiators may be limited or expanded at any time, and either country may withdraw or change instructions at any time before a final treaty is ratified.

Characteristics of Germanians:

1. Educational level of adult population averages high-

school-plus. Large numbers of technically-educated and professional people; literacy rate is 95%-plus.

2. Average per capita adult income is $10,000 per year-plus (expressed in United States dollars). Inflation rate is 12%.

3. Heavy manufacturing and industrial base, very little agriculture.

4. Long cultural history (3,000 years plus), with titled aristocracy, which is highly respected by population. Government is constitutional monarchy.

5. Religion is predominantly Christian (90%), including mixture of several Protestant denominations and 15% Roman Catholics; 7% Jewish.

6. Heavy consumption of durable and perishable goods. Standard of living is comparable to middle-class and upper-class Kansas City, Missouri. 2% in poverty, but supported with extensive welfare system. 95% have autos, 99% have TV in home.

7. Infant mortality rate is 4 per 1,000. Life expectancy is 70 years for men, 75 years for women.

8. Family size is an average of 3.75 per household.

9. Unemployment rate is 2%.

10. Population density is 312 people per square mile.

11. Horses are outlawed on major thoroughfares and other paved roads, although racing of thorobreds is favorite pastime of landed gentry. Popular recreation includes boating, professional football (soccer), horse racing, auto

racing, camping.

Characteristics of Franistanians:

1. Educational level of adult population averages 4th grade. Very few high school graduates, almost no technically-educated or professionally-educated. Literacy rate is 10%. One high school (in Midly) no colleges or technical schools.

2. Average per capita adult income is $500 per year (in United States dollars). Inflation rate is 2%.

3. No heavy manufacturing or industrial base; large agriculture and mining of raw materials.

4. Long cultural history (3,000 years plus), without peerage system for past 300 years. Government is democratic republic, with elected congress and chief executive (4 year terms). However, Franistanians are awed by titles of nobility and tradition.

5. Religion is predominantly Protestant, including most "fundamental" denominations. Leading group is Baptist, 27%. 2% Roman Catholics, .1% Jewish. Several non-Christian religions are practiced, by 14% of population. 10% of population practices polygamy.

6. Select consumption of durable goods. 10% of homes have refrigerators, 40% have electricity; 50% have indoor plumbing; 20% have TV; 60% have radio. 24% have automobiles. Most frequent mode of transportation is bicycle or walking, but horses are common.

7. Infant mortality rate is 7 per 1,000 in hospital, 250 per

1,000 out of hospital. Maternal death rate is 2 per 1,000 in hospital, 75 per 1,000 out of hospital. Life expectancy is 48 years for men, 27 years for women (an average increase of five years for women since Franistanians began using the hospitals regularly).

8. Family size averages 6.5 per family.

9. Unemployment rate is 25%, adjusted seasonally.

10. Population density is 19 people per square mile. The only urban center of 5,000 or more is Midly.

11. Few paved roads, many dirt roads and paths. Popular recreation includes foot races between members of nearby villages, and field events (throwing things). National football team (soccer) is source of considerable national pride.

CONCERNS

For longer usage, the first day might be spent in developing in-class "cultures" for both nations, without specifying until the start of the second class period the nature of the activity which the students are supposed to undertake. A third class-session might profitably be spent in de-briefing--examining how decisions were made, what techniques were used to alleviate (or failed to alleviate) conflict, what assumptions, beliefs and attitudes were exhibited throughout the exercise.

When used as a longer than one-session exercise, the more detailed description of cultural characteristics might

be duplicated, and distributed to students during the first class session. To make data more meaningful, the statistical comparisons for each country might be compared with the United States (through using recent census data or as an additional project, for students to determine the United States equivalent through utilizing standard reference works.) Additional information might be added by the instructor, or determined in response to questions from students.

It may be difficult getting negotiators to the negotiation table the first time, as some groups want the negotiators to have a fully-developed plan for the initial presentation. In such instances, it may be necessary to urge negotiation teams to go the the negotiation area to find out what the other country wants. After the first exchange between negotiators, and negotiators report back to their fellow countrymen, the interaction among negotiators remains high--they will not have to be urged to return to the bargaining table again.

The instructor may need to discuss possibilities with non-negotiators while the negotiations are in progress, however; in some groups, there is a tendency for individuals to "sit back and wait" for the negotiators to return. To increase group involvement during these times, the instructor might inquire whether the country has confidence in their negotiators, what will happen if the other country does not

agree to their proposals, and similar probes. Without this interaction between instructor and group during times when negotiators are out of the country, different levels of involvement will occur among group members--and some may withdraw from participation completely.

The results of this activity usually include a weak and hastily drawn treaty, as negotiations typically cannot be captured in written form by most students within the time allowed. The instructor may have to press for a treaty throughout the exercise, by reminding negotiators and countries of the time remaining for the completion of the treaty. Often, the negotiations merely prompt a war-like posture from both nations. In a few instances, the two countries decide to merge and become one nation. The more common solution is for Germania to agree to build a hospital in Franistan, staff it temporarily, and accept raw materials from Franistan as payment. A second result from this exercise is that several individuals will exhibit leadership abilities which may have been hidden to that date. A third result is that students will have increased understanding of the factors involved in decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution (and communication behaviors generally) as a result of the exercise. Students typically gain insights into communication behaviors and perception which they do not grasp as intensely from other types of activity. And they usually enjoy the exercise.